



COUNTY OF SOMERSET DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES

OFFICE OF OPERATIONS & PLANNING

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Human Services Director
MICHAEL FROST
Planning Administrator
ZACHARY BERLINER
Mental Health Administrator
AFN Coordinator
MEG ISBITSKI
Addictions Services Director
LISA FEDERICO

Aging & Disability Services
JOANNE FETZKO
Community Development
KIMBERLY COWART
One Stop Career Center
Juvenile Institutional Services
MONICA MULLIGAN
Richard Hall Community HWC
NICCI SPINAZZOLA
Rutgers Cooperative Extension
LISA ROTHENBURGER
Veterans Services
PETER NIEMIEC
Volunteer Services
WILLIAM F. CROSBY
Youth Services
LINDA M. PORCARO

HUMAN SERVICES ADVISORY COUNCIL

Wednesday, July 26, 2023 Meeting Minutes
Meeting held via Zoom

Council Members Present:

Chair Mary Jane DiPaolo, Community Child Care Solutions
Vice-Chair Pastor Tim Wolf, Pioneer Family Success Center
Herardine Lacrete, Board of Social Services
LuAnn Dias, Catholic Charities Diocese of Metuchen (CCDOM)
Lucy Forgione, Bernards Township Health Department
Mallory Dubuisson, Atlantic Adult Day Center
Michelle DuFour, Division of Child Protection and Permanency (DCP&P)
Mike Frost, Director of the Department of Human Services
Nancy Good, Alternatives, Inc
Nicci Spinazzola, Richard Hall Community Health and Wellness Center
Paul Grzella, The Greater Raritan Workforce Development Board (GRWDB)
Rajni Chopra, Martin Luther King Youth Center (MLKYC)
Richard Schumann, Family and Community Services (FCS)

Council Members Excused:

David Walker, Visions and Pathways
Secretary Diann Robinson, Adult Day Center
Dr. Mark Avery, Zarephath Christian Church
Michele Boronkas, Safe + Sound Somerset
Steven Nagel, HomeSharing

Council Members Absent:

Council Officials and Liaisons:

Nelson Troche, DHS

Somerset County Department of Human Services (SCDHS) Staff:

Coordinator Rheanah Johnson, Office of Operations and Planning (OAP)
Jan Goodman, Greater Raritan One-Stop
Ihinosen Akhagba, Intern Office of Operations and Planning (OAP)
Kim Cowart, Community Development
Kristy Soriano, Office of Youth Services

Meg Isbitski, Office of Operations and Planning (OAP)
Monica Mulligan, Juvenile Institution Services & Greater Raritan One Stop
Stephanie Billitz, Office of Operations and Planning (OAP)
Zachary Berliner, Office of Operations and Planning (OAP)

Guests:

Brendan Ward, Big Brothers Big Sisters
Cecilia Genao, Norwescap
Christina Martinkovic, The Learning Gate
Debra Crossman SSG Program Coordinator
Denise Kilby, Norwescap
Elaine Howe, Somerset County Vocational Technical High School
Jemmell'z Washington-Rock, Office of Food Security Advocate (OFSA)
Jill Davitsky, Jewish Family Services
Jonathan Schwartz, Hudson Hill
Kiele Cruise, Montgomery Township
Leonor Sagado, Zufall Health
Mark Dinglasan, Office of Food Security Advocate (OFSA)
Maria Marnell, Hunterdon County Educational Services Commission
Nikki Bryant, Community Child Care Solutions
Reina Garcia Perfecto, Zufall Health
Samantha Boruchov, Hudson Hill
Sarah Skrocki, Central Jersey Family Health Consortium
Shaina Sherman, Jewish Family Services
Steve Katz, Food Bank Network of Somerset County
Steven Hunter, Office of New Americans
Tania Asmal, Zufall Health

I. Call Meeting to Order & Introductions

Mary Jane DiPaolo called the meeting to order at 1:34 PM. A quorum was established.

II. Approval of the June 28, 2023, Minutes

Motion to approve the June 2023 meeting minutes was made by Tim Wolf and seconded by Steve Katz. Abstentions were made by LuAnn Dias, Michelle Dufor, and Nancy Good. Motion carried.

NJ Office of the Food Security Advocate (OFSA): Jemmell'z Washington-Rock, Program Manager & Mark Dinglasan, Executive Director

- The Office of the Food Security Advocate was created through legislation in 2021.
- Executive Director is a Governor Appointee
- Executive director reports to Chief Policy Advisor and their designee
- Three focus areas:
 - Informing Policy:
 - Advocate in Trenton for the needs of stakeholders in the food system
 - Reference most relevant and up-to-date data and best practices in policy meetings
 - Build relationships with legislators and departmental leadership to create support for food security work

- Collaborating with Philanthropy:
 - Create partnerships among philanthropy
 - Make connections among philanthropic partners that are invested in food security
 - Build common language and common understanding in philanthropy
- Organizing Local Agencies
 - Build common language and common understanding among local organizations invested in food security work
 - Make connections among organizations and coalitions
 - Participate in and support ongoing program and advocacy efforts when and where possible
- Food Insecurity in New Jersey: Approximately 7.4% of households; and 9.0% of children live in homes without consistent access to adequate food for everyone to live healthy, active lives (NJSHAD, 2022).
- Contact:
 - Mark Dinglasan, Executive Director: Mark.Dinglasan@ag.nj.gov
 - Dr. Jenny Schrum, Research & Evaluation Manager: Jennifer.Schrum@ag.nj.gov
 - Jemmell'z Washington-Rock, Program Manager: Jemmellz.Washington@ag.nj.gov

Office of New Americans (ONA): Steven Hunter, MSW, Community Outreach Specialist

- Office of New American Goals
 - Promote outreach, trainings, and other community supports to inform new Americans of their rights and of the services available to them.
 - Increase accessibility to State programs through partnerships with organizations and advocacy groups.
 - Coordinate with organizations and advocacy groups to ensure service accessibility through cultural competency and language access.
- ONA Priorities: Making New Jersey a Welcoming State
 - Coordinate to identify programs and support the needs of unaccompanied minors
 - Coordinating efforts across state agencies (Children and Families, Health, and Education) for resources
 - Provide legal services to those facing detention and deportation
 - Continue collaboration and coordination with refugee resettlement and service providers
 - NewAmericans.nj.gov
- Cover All Kids
 - Cover all Kids is an initiative to reach uninsured children in New Jersey under the age of 19. This program provides NJ FamilyCare coverage to all income-eligible kids in New Jersey, regardless of immigration status. Coverage includes but is not limited to routine care, immunizations, dental care, eye care, hospitalization, prescriptions and more!
 - Takeways
 - NJ FamilyCare application is available:
 - Online: njfamilycare.org
 - In Person: [County Board of Social Services](#)
 - Over the phone: 1-800-701-0710 (TTY: 711)

- The applicant must reside in New Jersey and having a valid mailing address to complete the application.
 - No Social Security Number needed to complete the application.
 - The person filling out the application does not have to apply for coverage for themselves. They will not have to share their citizenship or immigration status.
- Contact:
 - Steven Hunter, MSW Steven.Hunter@dhs.nj.gov

III. State and County Agency Reports

Division of Child Protection and Permanency (DCP&P) – Michelle DuFour

2023	June
Families	343 (70% intake cases)
Children	641
Children in Placement	35
Referral Type	
Child Protective Service Referrals	134
Child Welfare Referrals	20
Allegation Type	
Neglect	239
Physical Abuse	55
Sexual Abuse	10
Emotional Abuse	0

Somerset County Board of Social Services- Herardine Lacrete

2023	July
TANF	186
GA	235
Food Stamps	5,421
Medicaid	15,837
Temp Rental Assist	103
People Facing Homelessness	142
Single People	85
Single Families	35

Department of Human Services (DHS) – Nelson Troche

- The Office of New Americans has offices throughout the state including Trenton and Newark.
- To address mental health at the state level Governor Murphy’s signed a bill A3334 expanding services for K-12 in public schools.
- July is Disability Pride Month

- In recognition of the 1-year anniversary of the 988 Suicide and Crisis Hotline the Commissioner is highlighting additional state funds to help the 988 efforts and public awareness campaigns will go out soon.

Human Services Director's Report – Mike Frost

- On July 10, 2023, The New Jersey Division of Consumer Affairs (“DCA”), held its Social Work outreach program: New Jersey Social Work Licensure: You've got questions, we've got answers. Edie Nugent, Executive Director for the New Jersey Board of Social Work Examiners lead the program. There were 114 people in attendance with an extensive Q&A portion. Licensing process times seem to have decreased.
- The Somerset Helps Mobile Outreach Van is available and has been out and about.
- Has been serving as a representative from the New Jersey County Human Service Director Association on the mental health special needs task force for the Attorney General. The group is finally at the stage of preparing and filing the final report. Mike was asked to write the mental health overview of the report. Which is a coming together law enforcement personnel, people for helping professions, and a variety of advocates that have put together a cogent package.
- The Community Police Alliance Program is expanding to Bound Brook. Dameon Stackhouse is going to be the supervisor for the program. The first round of interviews for the Bound Brook Coordinator has been completed. The target of onboarding is October 2023.
- Tiffany Wilson, who has been a long-time member of the prosecutor's office in Union County has been promoted to Director of the Office of Alternative and Community Responses for the Attorney General's Office. Oversees community policing and response. Will be working out a mechanism to add Arrive Alive officers to Somerset County.

Committee Reports – Rheanah Johnson shared committee meetings will resume in the fall.

IV. New Business - The annual Joint Council meeting will be held in September in place of a regular meeting. The topic will focus on isolation and loneliness considering the Surgeon General recent report. More information will be shared in the coming months.

V. Agency Highlights/Announcements

- Jonathan Schwartz, Hudson Hill – Hudson Hill provides community based and individual supports to the intellectual and developmentally disabled adult community. A new two-family home will be available to support 8 adults on West End Ave. in Somerville. There are rooms available with each resident having their own room and restroom. More information can be found at thehudsonhillgroup.com.
- LuAnn Dias, Catholic Charities Diocese of Metuchen – The Somerset County prosecutor's office does a critical infrastructure assessment of your organization. A team came out and did drone videos and inspection of the buildings and nearby buildings to assess safety and security issues. This was followed by a report which was very useful for working on a plan to implement more security measures. This is highly recommended.
- Shaina Sherman, Jewish Family Services- JFS will be running two pilot programs in the fall. The first is a free therapeutic group for teens called Stress Less. The second is at Therapeutic group for older adults to reduce isolation called Artful Connection. A local artist will participate in leading activities for the group to include memoir and poetry writing.
- Paul Grzella, The Greater Raritan Workforce Development Board- The GRWDB is working on a NJ initiative utilizing \$60,000 in ARP funds to add literacy classes for those who most need them in places where we have not previously had literacy classes such as Bernardsville. Additional classes are being

added to established programs such as Bound Brook and Franklin. Information on all the classes is available online. Stella Nieves is the new literacy navigator for Somerset County. The vision for her position is to connect people to not only literacy and workforce services but other services throughout the county.

- VI.** Motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Tim Wolf and seconded Rajni Chopra. The meeting was adjourned at 2:38 PM.

The next meeting will be held on October 25, 2023, at 1:30 PM in-person and via Zoom. The link will be sent out a week prior via email.